ON BEING A FULL-TIME FATHER
(VOICED PIECE AND INSERTS AVAILABLE IN TAPE LIBRARY)

ANNCR: DATELINE NEW YORK ... PICTURES IN SOUND OF PEOPLE, PLACES AND EVENTS IN THE AMERICAN METROPOLIS. TODAY ON DATELINE, THE STORY OF A NEW YORK FATHER WHO COULD NOT SEE WHY A WORKING FATHER SHOULD NOT BE ENTITLED TO THE SAME LEAVE BENEFITS AS A WORKING MOTHER. THE RESULT: THE FIRST FATHER TO GET PATERNITY LEAVE FROM THE NEW YORK SCHOOL SYSTEM. YOU'LL HEAR THE DETAILS IN THIS REPORT FROM ALICE RICHMAN SCHACHNER.

NARR: IT ALL BEGAN IN NINETEEN SEVENTY-THREE WHEN JERRY CAMMARATA'S SECOND CHILD WAS BORN. THE NEW YORK SCHOOL BOARD CUSTOMARILY GRANTS EXTENDED MATERNITY LEAVE TO ITS FEMALE TEACHERS. BUT MR. CAMMARATA, WHO IS A SPEECH THERAPIST, FELT THAT MALE TEACHERS WHO BECAME FATHERS SHOULD HAVE THE SAME RIGHT TO BE HOME. HE TOOK HIS CASE TO THE COURT AND, THANKS TO A RULING BY THE EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES COMMISSION, WON HIS SUIT. JERRY CAMMARATA IS NOW IN HIS FOURTH AND FINAL YEAR OF PATERNITY LEAVE WITHOUT PAY AND HE HASN'T REGRETTED A MINUTE OF IT. HE IS ONLY SORRY THAT SO FEW MEN BOTH IN AND OUT OF TEACHING HAVE FOLLOWED HIS EXAMPLE:

TAPE: CUT ONE -- CAMMARATA

"EVERY INSTITUTION IN THE UNITED STATES THAT HAS A MATERNITY LEAVE CLAUSE ON THE BOOKS MUST GIVE A PATERNITY LEAVE "STAY" FOR THE SAME DURATION TO ANY MAN WHO ASKS FOR IT. BUT YET, THEY ARE NOT DOING IT. MANY PEOPLE SAY, "WELL, YOU KNOW THIS IS NOT FOR EVERYBODY. EVERY MAN IS NOT GOING TO TAKE A PATERNITY LEAVE. EVERY MAN DESN'T WANT TO STAY HOME WITH THE CHILDREN." I MUST CONFESS THAT I HAVE TO ABIDE BY THT STATEMENT. IT'S VERY TRUE. BUT NONETHELESS, I THINK

TAPE:
(CONT'D) THEY (MEN) ARE MORE AND MORE RESPONSIBLE TODAY AND WE ARE SEEING THIS RESPONSIBILITY IN THE FORM OF BEING PART OF THE BIRTH PROCESS. NOW IF THEY COULD ONLY STRETCH IT A LITTLE MORE. GIVE THEMSELVES WEEKS, GIVE THEMSELVES SIX MONTHS. IT WOULD BE MARVELOUS IF THEY COULD GIVE THEMSELVES A YEAR. BUT I WOULD SAY SIX MONTHS WOULD BE AN ABSOLUTELY IDEAL OPPORTUNITY FOR THEM TO BE HOME AND ENGAGE IN THE CHILD REARING PROCESS THAT MAKES FOR A STABLE YOUNG INDIVIDUAL."

NARR: WITH THE ONLY WAGE-EARNER OUT OF WORK THE CAMMARATA'S STYLE OF LIVING HAD TO CHANGE. JERRY CAMMARATA GOT A PART-TIME JOB BUT IT PAID LESS THAN HALF OF WHAT THE FAMILY HAD BEEN ACCUSTOMED TO. TO SOLVE THAT PROBLEM, THEY SOLD THEIR HOME AND CAR AND MOVED IN WITH MRS. CAMMARATA'S PARENTS. THE BENEFITS OF THIS ARRANGEMENT WERE MORE THAN FINANCIAL. THE CHILDREN LEARNED ABOUT THE BACKGROUND AND HERITAGE OF THEIR ITALIAN-BORN GRANDPARENTS. JERRY CAMMARATA FEELS THAT THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY HAS AN OBLIGATION TO PUT PATERNITY LEAVE WITHIN THE REACH OF ANY MAN WHO WANTS IT. HE THINKS THIS COULD BE DONE BY THE CREATION OF A BANK ACCOUNT OR "FATHER'S FUND" WITH BOTH PARTIES CONTRIBUTING. FAMILY PLANNING WOULD ALSO ALLOW MARRIED COUPLES TO SAVE THE MONEY THEY NEED FOR PATERNITY LEAVE WHEN THEIR CHILD IS BORN. MANY OF THE CAMMARATAS' MALE NEIGHBORS ARE WHAT COULD BE TERMED "TRADITIONALISTS." AT FIRST THEY COULDN'T UNDERSTAND WHY HE WANTED TO STAY HOME. BUT NOW THEY ARE REACHING OUT TO HIM WITH SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT THEIR OWN LIVES.

TAPE: CUT TWO -- CAMMARATA

"IN ONE RESPECT I'M REACHING OUT. AND THAT IS GETTING INVOLVED IN THE WRITING OF A BOOK THAT IS PRETTY MUCH AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL IN NATURE. IN THAT I'M TRYING TO PROJECT THE THINGS THAT I FEEL HAVE WORKED FOR ME DURING MY YEARS AT HOME ON PATERNITY LEAVE. AND, THE THINGS THAT HAVEN'T WORKED. BECAUSE THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS AN IDEAL PARENT. IF I'VE MADE FIVE MISTAKES, I'VE MADE FIVE MILLION MISTAKES.

TAPE:
(CONT'D) BUT I FEEL EVERY MISTAKE HAS NOT HINDERED THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FAMILY NOR OF MYSELF BUT HAS LED US TO DO SOMETHING ELSE AND TO MAKE OUR LIVES A LITTLE BETTER, A LITTLE RICHER, A LITTLE BIT MORE REWARDING."

NARR: THE CAMMARATA CHILDREN FEEL VERY SPECIAL HAVING THEIR FATHER HOME SO MUCH OF THE TIME. THE OLDEST DAUGHTER IS NOW IN SCHOOL BUT THE YOUNGEST GETS TAKEN TO ALL THE PLACES A FATHER AND CHILD CAN ENJOY TOGETHER. MRS. CAMMARATA NOW HAS ALL THE HELP SHE NEEDS AT HOME BUT EVERYBODY HAS HAD TO MAKE SOME ADJUSTMENTS. IN THE BEGINNING, HER HUSBAND THOUGHT IT WAS HIS RESPONSIBILITY TO TAKE OVER AND JUST MAKE LIFE EASIER, FOR HIS WIFE.

TAPE: CUT THREE -- CAMMARATA

"BUT THEN I REALIZED, WELL,THAT'S NOT WHY WE'RE IN THIS WORLD -- TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR SOMEBODY ELSE. WE'RE HERE SO THAT WE ALL CAN COOPERATE, WORK HARD AND IN THE PROCESS REALLY LEARN. YOU'RE COMING INTO THE HOUSE BASICALLY AS AN OUTSIDER. YOU HAVE YOUR RESPONSIBILITY THAT EVERYBODY LOOKS UP TO YOU FOR -- THAT BEING YOUR JOB POSITION. NOW YOU'RE COMING INTO THE HOUSE AND YOU'RE TELLING YOUR WIFE WHAT TO DO TOO. WHERE IS HER RESPONSIBILITY? YOU CAN'T RELEGATE HER TO SECOND POSITION. SO NOW MY ROLE AT HOME IS SECONDARY. I DO WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE AFTER SHE DECIDES WHAT SHE'S GOING TO DO. BECAUSE THAT'S HER HOME AND SHE'S GOING TO HAVE TO LIVE THERE A LITTLE BIT MORE THAN I AM ONCE I GO BACK TO WORK."

NARR: JERRY CAMMARATA WILL GO BACK TO HIS FULL-TIME TEACHING JOB IN THE FALL OF NINETEEN SEVENTY-SEVEN. HE DOESN'T KNOW WHAT KIND OF EFFECT HIS STAYING HOME IS HAVING ON HIS CHILDREN BUT HE HOPES IT IS AS POSITIVE FOR THEM AS IT IS FOR HIM. IN THE MEANTIME, HE'S HAVING SUCH A FINE TIME WATCHING AND HELPING THEM GROW HE WONDERS HOW ANY MAN CAN RESIST THE OPPORTUNITY TO DO THE SAME.

AN CR: THIS HAS BEEN DATELINE ... NEW YORK ... PICTURES IN SOUND OF PEOPLE PLACES AND EVENTS IN THE AMERICAN METROPOLIS. JOIN US AGAIN NEXT WEEK (AT THE SAME TIME) FOR ANOTHER ... DATELINE NEW YORK.

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